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THE

Commonweal

Spain: 1954

by Charles Henry Lee

Abbé Pierre and The Homeless

by Robert Barrat

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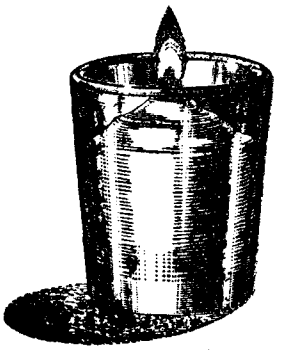

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THE
Commonweal
week by week

THE ADVANCE ON HANOI AND GENEVA

THE developing Communist offensive in northern Indochina is clear enough warning that time, in that wounded part of the world, heals nothing; that Western delays for negotiation may well end with the subject of negotiation beyond the point where negotiation could do any good.

The Communists have been plucking small victories in the area of Laos and in an ominous ring around Hanoi. Their supplies moved up in quantity during the week when the French traded an inhibition on air strikes for the privilege of collecting the Dienbienphu wounded, one helicopter-load at a time. That situation was ended by General Navarre's decision to resume attacks on Route 41, and the removal of the wounded mercifully continues. But four advancing Viet Minh divisions are within seventy-five miles of Hanoi, and there are skirmishes as near as thirty miles.

Reports from Hanoi say that the three French general officers who made a special trip to Indochina are urging the replacement of Navarre and the sending of thirty thousand reinforcements, possibly to include (for the first time) French draftees.

It is nonsense to pretend that anything but drastic and immediate action can prevent all of northern Viet Nam from falling to the Communists. There are rumors of a general uprising; there is something of a panic in Hanoi. Businesses are moving out to Saigon in the south and transportation out of the city is swamped. Under these circumstances the people who have been sitting on the political fence—perhaps a majority of the Vietnamese—have good reason to cast their lot with the apparent victors. And the anti-Communist Vietnamese—more of whom live in northern Viet Nam than anywhere else in that nation—can do little more than prepare to sell their lives dearly or to go underground.

They have good reason for despair. While the French army is fighting bitterly and honorably, the French-dominated local government is not, on its highest levels at least, conducting itself so bravely. Every cabinet officer in the Vietnamese government has been in Europe during this crisis—many of them with their families. Bao Dai, the chief of state, has been in France—for good reasons, but reasons which do not seem quite so good as that of trying to hold together a state which is disintegrating.

THE situation throughout the Red River Delta today is as dangerous as was the situation at Dienbienphu when the siege began. But this emergency seems to be a muted one. There are few outcries in Washington. Silent determination is surely preferable to publicized cross-purposes; the question is whether the silence denotes concentration or lethargy. There are decisions to be made. We and the British have reconciled our policies for Geneva, and we are agreed that we cannot suspend action forever while the Communists carve off larger and larger pieces of Viet Nam. But if the Communists prolong the negotiations for a cease-fire while they press their military offensive, what specific steps are we to take?

How important to us is the saving of the Red River Delta? Are we prepared to hand over northern Viet Nam to military conquest—our native allies with it? How important to us is Hanoi?

If these places and people *are* important, how far are we willing to go to save them? Do British, Australasians, French and Americans have the outlines of a military policy, not for a future SEATO, but for the defense of Hanoi? Are the American people being told of the measures which may be asked of them in the next few weeks? Or are we to have another panic like the one over Dienbienphu followed by another Western collapse?

It would be well for us to decide just what must be saved in Indochina and what price we are willing to pay to save it; it is worth remembering too that our present irresolution does a great deal more to make eventual military intervention necessary than would a clearly-announced policy which entailed the threat of unified military intervention. It is

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optimism indeed to think that the Communists will agree to a cease-fire before they have fully exploited their military advantage.

COMMENCEMENT NOTE

RECENT articles and letters in The Commonweal have aroused considerable interest in the subject of the impact of the contemporary Catholic college graduate upon our dominantly secular world. It is fairly generally agreed that, whatever the initial impact, in the end it is the world which usually influences the attitudes of the young graduate rather than vice versa.

For this there are many reasons, among them the great difficulty of communication. It would be a mistake to read too much into it, but there is a brief note in the current issue of *Time* magazine which indicates the extent of the existing gap. It seems that one of the larger reprint book publishers recently asked some two dozen prominent American historians, educators and journalists in what order they would rank the most significant events of human history. They placed the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus first and the development of movable type by Guttenberg second. They selected eleven additional events before they came to the Crucifixion, to which they assigned mathematically equal significance with the use of ether for surgery, the going-into-effect of the Constitution of the United States, the discovery of the X-ray and the first flight by the Wright brothers.

Because of such a gap in basic beliefs and assumptions, it appears that Catholics have their best opportunity to gain a hearing for their sociological and philosophical principles by approaching things indirectly. Only when their compatriots are struck by the zeal with which Catholic citizens take on responsibility for common civic concerns will interest be aroused in the underlying convictions that would explain such civic zeal.

American Catholics are often criticized by their fellow-citizens for holding aloof in local community and other civic matters or for things like favoring the theory of international organizations in general while vehemently opposing the UN. Happily the idea is growing that Christian social principles cannot be put into practice here and now—or required social reforms be realized—without the active cooperation of public-spirited Americans of various religious and even secular persuasions. And it is in entering the lists with a full realization of this prospect that Catholic college graduates will eventually make their presence felt more widely. Assuredly they have much in the way of historical experience and feasible ideas to contribute to the betterment of their respective communities and the country as a whole.

NEXT WEEK

JEAN C. DE MENASCE writes about Jacques Maritain in one of three articles about the life and influence of the eminent French philosopher:

"Now there is nothing at all of the college professor about Maritain, none of that cocksure, *ex-cathedra* air; nor does he in the least resemble an ambassador, or an ex-ambassador. In a word, there is nothing important or official about him. Thousands of little men give an impression of authority, of importance, of rightfully occupying the seat behind their desk. Maritain on the contrary has something of the beggar about him, but of that kind of a beggar we shall never meet, supremely free and serviceable. . . ."

CONTRA GENTILES

IN an intense, frequently brilliant address given before the American Unitarian Association, in Boston, Mrs. Agnes E. Meyer had much to say about "Democracy as a Moral Force." Mrs. Meyer is rapidly becoming the national spokesman for a concept of 'democracy' that would, we think, ideologize traditional democracy right out of existence. (She herself, in the Boston speech, spoke of Communism as democracy's "powerful rival ideology.")

Mrs. Meyer's address to the Unitarian gathering is a thoughtful, serious piece of work. There is much in it with which we would agree; and the underlying philosophy, with which we would emphatically disagree, is coherently set forth and impresses one as the sincere belief of a woman who has given a great deal of thought and energy to her responsibilities as a citizen. Having said this much and meant it sincerely, we must go on to say that Mrs. Meyer's philosophy of democracy, in our opinion, would mark the end of political freedom in the United States were it actually put into effect. The reason for this rather drastic statement is the conviction that Mrs. Meyer earnestly demands of democracy what democracy cannot give without destroying itself.

The day democracy becomes a religion, a substitute for religion, a rival to religion, or when it reduces religion to the role of its political handmaiden, it will have changed so fundamentally that

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it will be a different thing. It will be an ideology then and no longer merely a method of government. Government, then, will be an instrument of the new ideological 'democracy.' And this is the danger we find in Mrs. Meyer's bland proposals.

As democracy has functioned up to now, it has not been an absolute; Americans have looked beyond the state for their absolutes. In America, men can freely appeal to a morality which transcends our political system. Men are left free even when they do not serve the ends of democracy, as democracy in given circumstances wants to be served, because of the appeals they make to religious beliefs, personal convictions or conscientious adherence to those principles which are respected by democracies and accepted as transcendent to any political claim. Thus, the Biblical pacifist quotes his Scripture to the draft board; the Witness of Jehovah advises his children not to salute the flag; the anarchist mounts a soapbox in Columbus Circle . . . In Mrs. Meyer's philosophy, there would seem to be no room for such appeals. 'Democracy' itself will provide the system of morality (or standard of wrong and right), and this morality will transcend the claims made by religion or the conscience of individual citizens and groups of citizens. "Democracy," she says (and adds boldly "as we have always hitherto taken for granted") "can generate a system of moral principles." These principles, described as America's "secular morality," create "a concept of democracy itself as a moral ideal which unites all peoples, all religions, races and cultures. . . ." This moral ideal is "secularism, rightly understood." And secularism, when rightly understood, will "make us all brothers of one another."

All this seems to mean that secularism—or the separation of religion from practical affairs—is the theology of the new 'democracy.' Mrs. Meyer herself does not flinch from the theological vocabulary and quotes with approval Henry Steele Commager's words that "public education (has become) the American religion. . . ."

The public school, in Mrs. Meyer's scheme, is apparently the seminary of the new democratic religion. She goes on to say that the "public school even more than the family, the church, business institutions, political and social groups and other institutions, has become an effective agency for giving to all people that broad background of attitudes and skills required to function effectively as participants in a democracy."

This may seem a harmless enough statement, and if Mrs. Meyer merely meant that the public school, or the private school for that matter, gave one the education and training which helped him function effectively as a citizen, no one could take issue with it. But in the context, it seems to mean that there are certain philosophic beliefs, certain attitudes toward God and man, certain evaluations of religion, science, art, history, the meaning of existence, etc., which the indoctrinated 'democrat' requires—in a word, she seems to be proposing a 'democratic' ideology.

We would rather cling to the idea that Americans function in political life according to their separate beliefs—and that these beliefs are inculcated not through the state or even primarily through the public school but through the voluntary associations which serve as a brake on the state's power, at the same time they make their separate vital contributions to our national life. Such voluntary associations, we would say, are the very families, churches, business institutions, political and social groups that Mrs. Meyer refers to.

Democracy, we would insist, does not exist in order to answer the ultimate why's; nor does man exist in order to serve democracy. Rather democracy exists as a technique of government which assures freedom and liberty to all, regardless of how they may disagree about the ultimate questions or may differ on such vital matters as those proposed by their various churches, families, political and social groups, etc.

Our democracy has grown great on the basis of unity without uniformity. We have garnered rich fruit from our very agreement to disagree. If the day comes when we have to put our individual beliefs aside or subordinate them to some "system of moral principles" generated by 'democracy' itself, we will have to find a new word for the system of government which has served—not created—our freedom. It will not be 'democracy'—but there are easily a half-dozen *ism* words to describe the ideological adventure we will then be embarked on.

"THE SIN OF SEGREGATION"

WRITING in The Commonweal for Sept. 21, 1945, Father George H. Dunne, S.J., said: "Yet none but the obtuse and insensitive can pretend for a moment that a people subject to a pattern of racial segregation enjoy equal opportunities with others for the pursuit of happiness."

Like many other condemnations of segregation, in this and other publications, Father Dunne's article was at the time roundly attacked, as well as praised and widely re-printed. Now, in a historic decision that owes as much to the findings of modern sociology and psychology as to legal precedents, the Supreme Court has put its feelings on segregation in the public schools succinctly: "Separate edu-

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cational facilities," the Court said, "are inherently unequal."

This is a statement with which the editors of this magazine are in complete agreement, and we rejoice at the decision of the Court, as well as at the unanimity of the Justices on this matter. We are confident that the implementation of the Court's ruling can be achieved speedily and with a minimum of difficulty, given a certain measure of cooperation and good will which will surely be forthcoming from all but the most intractable, now that the Court has spoken. The decision of the Court was right and just, and democracy is stronger for it.

BEG, BORROW OR TRADE

THE policy of the United States on trade with our allies remains suspiciously dog-in-the-manger-like. We want nations friendly to us to eliminate or sharply reduce their trade with the Soviet Union and its satellites. Given the hard facts of economic life today, this leaves our friends with three possibilities. They can ask for loans from the United States; they can beg for outright gifts from the United States; or they can trade with the United States. At this time the temper of the American people is clearly against gifts to our allies, and the climate in regard to loans grows steadily chillier. That leaves trade, which is really the only satisfactory long-range solution, both for us and our allies.

President Eisenhower is one who firmly believes in the necessity of expanding trade with our allies, and a year ago he set up the Randall Commission to make an extensive study of trade and tariffs. When the Commission wound up its work, it recommended a three-year extension of the main features of the Reciprocal Trade Act, including broad authority to the President to adjust tariff rates downward in return for concessions from other countries. Mr. Eisenhower in turn added his personal endorsement to these findings and sent them to Congress with a request for action.

Despite the urgency of the situation, Congress still has not acted on the President's proposal, largely because of pressure from the adherents of high tariffs. Now, with the Reciprocal Trade Act due to expire on June 12, the President has had to announce that he will settle for a one-year extension. At the very least this delay probably means more time-consuming hearings in the next session of Congress, and it may give enemies of the Reciprocal Trade Act an opportunity to kill the drive for lower tariffs and increased foreign trade entirely. Certainly President Eisenhower has been poorly supported on this important measure.

THE PRESS IN SPAIN

IN his article "Spain: 1954," which appears in this issue, Charles Henry Lee describes some of the factors in present-day Spain which may tend to modify or lessen the authoritarian character of the Franco regime. It is therefore pertinent to note in this connection that the Catholic magazine *Ecclesia* has just published criticisms of the Spanish government for its tight control on the press. *Ecclesia* is said to be controlled by the Catholic Bishops of Spain and is generally thought to speak for them on such matters. It is the only publication in the country that is not subject to government censorship.

According to newspaper accounts from Spain, *Ecclesia's* criticism of the government for its press policy was written by its editor-in-chief, Father Jesus Iribbarren. In it he is reported to have argued that a government-oriented press is not in the national interest, and he noted that present policies restrict the Catholic as well as the secular press. Father Iribbarren is further said to have charged that governmental policy on censorship is hindering the political development of the people, and he called for a new press law which would provide for freedom of information. So far, dispatches from Spain give no clue to the reasons behind *Ecclesia's* criticism of the government at this particular time.

MAX FISCHER

DR. Max Fischer, one of the most active of all Commonweal contributors in the past two decades, died suddenly on May 21 at the age of sixty-one. He had had a distinguished writing and editorial career in Germany before coming to this country in 1935 during one of the early Hitler purges. Dr. Fischer was a convert to Catholicism during his student days. He served as literary editor of *Hochland* for several years after completing his university studies. He did distinguished work as a foreign correspondent and an editor for one of the leading German newspapers.

For The Commonweal Dr. Fischer wrote on the widest range of subjects, reflecting his extensive travels, great learning and intense interest in people, history and philosophy. He manifested a keen sense for the trends of our time. He was an assiduous reader and in the course of eighteen years reviewed one hundred and seventy-five different volumes for this magazine. His was a genial and thoughtful spirit that will be greatly missed. May he rest in peace.

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Spain: 1954

"INSTEAD OF ISOLATING OURSELVES FROM WHAT IS GOING ON IN SPAIN, WE SHOULD ENDEAVOR TO RE-EVALUATE OUR RELATIONS WITH THAT COUNTRY."

CHARLES HENRY LEE

THE time has come for a long, hard look at our relations with Spain and her people. Fifteen years have elapsed since the end of the Spanish Civil War. Few wars have exacted as high a toll in lives (the figure most commonly mentioned is one million), and the property damage was tremendous. It became a prelude to World War II, with Italy and Germany aiding the Franco forces and Russia giving assistance to the Government of the Republic. In the United States it engendered the most heated controversy. The discussion was charged with violent feelings on both sides.

Finally the war ceased and Franco took over the reins of Government. But for those who hoped for a different outcome and were shocked by this development, it still was not over. Hope lives ever in the human breast, and in this case hope was nurtured and kept alive by the large number of high-caliber intellectual emigres and by continuous reports, purportedly emanating from within Spain, that the Franco Government's overthrowal was imminent. The regime was a fascist military dictatorship without real popular strength and support, it was said. Economic and social conditions were incredibly bad. It could not endure for long without economic and moral support from other countries.

There is no need to recite in detail subsequent developments. Despite the apparently insurmountable difficulties inherent in reconstruction, despite disease, poverty, famines and droughts, despite the loss of a substantial part of the professional and intellectual class and the impossibility of obtaining any foreign economic assistance, Spain has managed to survive, and the Franco Government has consolidated its position. Despite rumors and reports that it was toppling under the weight of its unpopularity and inefficiency, collapse never occurred, even though at times it seemed very close. So imminent did this collapse seem that Great Britain, France and the United States were instrumental in securing a UN agreement to withdraw ambassadors as an act of disapproval of Spain's government.

It is now history that these efforts at international intervention were most unsuccessful. Whereas the stability of the Franco Government was then at its lowest ebb, the diplomatic boycott gave him the necessary weapon—nationalism—to turn the tide in his favor. Any visitor to Spain in 1949 could confirm, as I did, that the UN blockade was interpreted there as a drive against Spain and her people rather than as a world censure of her Government.

Since then, the Government has strengthened its position notably. Production has been restored to, and above, pre-Civil War levels. Rationing is practically non-existent. War damage has for the most part been repaired and many new buildings are under construction. Older buildings are being modernized. Many highways are under construction and other roads are being fully repaired. Whatever one's personal feelings about the events of fifteen years ago, such facts in no way point to an impending collapse of the regime.

Anyone revisiting Spain at this time cannot help but be impressed at the degree of economic recovery that is everywhere apparent. The stores are well stocked and there is an abundance of food. The people are better dressed than they have been in a long time. Hotels and restaurants are well filled and many new ones have been opened throughout the country.

Neither in entering nor in moving about the country does one feel overly-conscious of a strong governmental arm. In the case of Americans, a visa is no longer even required for entering. Foreign periodicals are readily available on the newsstands. From time to time certain issues of specific publications are picked up by the Government, but this action does not extend to subscriptions which continue to be received freely.

WHILE these developments have been taking place in Spain, what has been happening at home in regard to our relations with that country? Generally speaking, newspapers and magazines have been highly unsympathetic and showed little understanding of Spanish problems. There has been a general feeling that nothing good could come out of Spain while the present regime lasted. Moreover, anything that did come out of that land was believed tainted with *"oficialisimo"* and

Mr. Lee, who once represented the United States in Latin America, is now engaged in private business in New York.

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enjoyed no standing of its own. For most U.S. observers, Spain was Franco, and Franco was Spain.

Spain's shortage of dollars made non-official travel well nigh impossible. Hardly any exchange of students and teachers took place at all. Our own State Department took the position that scholarships or fellowships were not worthwhile since they would be granted to Falangists exclusively. Cultural exchange was at a complete standstill. Under these circumstances, the prospects for Spain to obtain a better hearing were almost non-existent. Practically her only defenders were businessmen, who admire strong governments because they facilitate trade, and a number of discredited persons who felt compelled to speak up for Spain indiscriminately, under any and all circumstances.

The group which actually was responsible for changing the character of official U.S. relations with Spain was the military. Despite the strongest kind of political opposition and the attitude of the State Department, the press, labor, etc., defense considerations finally prevailed. Little by little relations between the two countries were altered substantially, commencing with the Ex-Im-Bank loan of $62,500,000—the first foreign economic aid received by Spain since the Civil War—and culminating last October in the execution of the defense agreements providing for military aid, base facility arrangements and economic aid.

Before the Defense Agreement was executed, there was plenty of opposition that had to be overcome in our country. When approval was finally given and the pact became a reality, the attitude of the press on the subject was particularly illuminating. By and large, newspapers and magazines fought any change in our relations with Spain to the very end. The main political argument employed was that aid to Spain was helping a totalitarian regime which had cooperated with Hitler and was frustrating the will of the people. This reasoning was used until it became apparent that defense considerations made imperative alliance with any nation that was prepared to resist Communism. Most of our press held that, in the name of defense, principles of sound international relations, democracy and freedom had been sacrificed for political expediency.

It is true that official relations have now improved. Tourism has increased, and business men are flocking to Spain in the expectation that the pact assures greater trade. A newly awakened interest in Spain has developed. But these indications of American interest are basically superficial.

In the light of recent developments, what should our present relationship with Spain and its people be? The official position is clear: A defense pact has been entered into between the United States and Spain. This obviously necessitates good official relations to assure its successful implementation, and despite Administration statements to the contrary, this means that Spain is in effect an integral part of the North Atlantic Defense scheme, even though she is not actually a member of NATO.

BEFORE attempting to determine the proper type of non-official relationship that should exist, an effort should be made to consider certain circumstances and factors which must be taken into account in arriving at any sound judgment on this subject. We cannot ignore what has happened and is happening in Spain.

The Civil War was so horrible and involved so many conflicting forces, both internal and external, that an objective appraisal would be a work of volumes, if one were to avoid the all-too-common error of over-simplification. For the purpose of these comments, it will suffice to say that the conclusion of the Spanish War did not substantially alter the general attitude of most Americans towards Spain. The majority of U.S. citizens were definitely sympathetic to the defeated Loyalist Government and continued to regret the Franco triumph. This view still persists and represents the judgment of a vast number of thinking people.

Many developments and changes have occurred within Spain, however, that should be thoughtfully considered, since they affect our relationship with that country and its people. First of all, a whole new generation has grown up since the Civil War. Young people in Spain cannot and do not have the sentiments and feelings of those who directly or indirectly participated in the conflict fifteen years ago. They have grown up under a system of government which, for better or worse, has enjoyed a degree of stability and continuity —something that is in itself a virtue in that country. Dictatorship is not, unfortunately, a new phenomenon in a land where strong governments and political instability have been the norm rather than the exception. Among those who either favored the late Republic initially or theoretically sympathize with the Anglo-Saxon concept of democracy, a surprisingly high percentage are either disillusioned with past republican experiments or now believe their countrymen to be temperamentally and historically unsuited for democratic rule.

The Falange obviously played an important part in the Nationalist victory, but it is no longer the force which casual observers believe. To begin with, the moment the war ended a very large part of its membership was lost.

Today, what remains of the Falange is composed of a hard core of perhaps misguided idealists; the bulk of

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the membership is drawn from those who are out to get such benefits as they can from what is not much more than a political party. These latter party members would be just as much at home in the Tammany organization as they are in the Falange.

Late last October, the Falange had a large national meeting for the first time in ten years. Some one hundred and fifty thousand persons participated, and the gathering was addressed by Franco. At first blush, it could have been interpreted as living proof of the vitality and continued strength of the movement. However, a more thorough investigation would have revealed the indifference and apathy with which the affair was viewed by the population as a whole.

Many factors have operated to hamper the renewal of normal intellectual and cultural life in Spain. The isolation in which the country existed until very recently, the shortage of foreign currency which made travel virtually impossible, the dire economic conditions which have only improved in the last few years, the loss of a large segment of the professional and intellectual class, the need of the regime to consolidate its position and its consequent reluctance to surrender any controls except gradually and unconsciously—all these circumstances have had their effect. Nevertheless, tremendous changes have taken place recently in the direction of greater political tranquility, increased prosperity and a freer interchange of ideas, both within the country and with the rest of the world.

Artists and intellectuals of present-day Spain are now visiting other countries. Music and dance developments within the country, such as the annual Granada Music and Dance festival, are attracting audiences and artists from abroad. Students and teachers from foreign lands are again studying in Spain. All these factors are contributing to re-create an atmosphere of intellectual and cultural revival.

Labor as a whole was, of course, on the Loyalist side during the Civil War. Free labor unions do not exist today, and strikes are forbidden. Nevertheless the present regime has done a great deal in an effort to secure labor's support, and the large body of labor and social legislation has tangibly benefited this class of society. The Government has made it a point to raise the purchasing power of the working classes by enforcing compulsory wage increases and by keeping down the price of basic commodities, such as bread and oil. Without a doubt the laboring class is relatively better off and has has had more done for it than the white collar workers, the ones who really suffer in Spain today.

In brief, the Spanish worker is for the most part a less than enthusiastic, yet not entirely unwilling, beneficiary of the Government's determination to avoid labor strife or an increase of Communistic activity. These days it is quite common to hear business and industrial people complain that labor is unduly favored; they say that in any controversy between employer and worker the latter is always upheld by the Government.

From the moment Franco emerged as the leader of the Revolution that brought about the eventual overthrowal of the Republic, the military was a basic element in his support. The *Caudillo* has endeavored at all times to retain and strengthen this support, and it appears unlikely that any important group within the military questions his leadership. The Defense Pact with the United States and the improved international position of Spain have contributed to enhance his stature with this important segment of the population.

Business men and the professional classes are generally sympathetic to Franco's Government, with their support ranging from lukewarm indorsement to generous enthusiasm. This does not mean that there is no dissatisfaction with the regime, but criticism relates to specific acts or particular policies rather than general condemnation.

FINALLY, the Church's attitude is not unlike that of many business men. There are, of course, certain elements who have idealized Franco and sincerely believe that he is the chivalrous knight errant who rode out of the West to save Christianity in Spain. However, the majority sentiment is more practical and realistic. Although the present regime has backed the Church and restored its traditional rights, it has exacted in return a degree of apparent official support that has not always been given enthusiastically. That is the majority point of view.

The other extreme in Catholic opinion has been open opposition such as that exhibited by the celebrated Cardinal Segura of Seville. Thus on a recent visit of the Generalissimo, the Cardinal deliberately left the city to avoid receiving him. However, the general attitude can best be described as one of reluctant, yet not completely unwilling, support, based on appreciation of the improvement that has been experienced.

What about freedom and liberty under what is still commonly termed a totalitarian regime? First of all, this description is today a misnomer if the term totalitarian is being used in the sense that it was applied to Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy or Communist Russia. Any objective observer must necessarily conclude that the Spanish regime is a dictatorship, but fortunately neither in character nor content is it today the kind of authoritarian government that prevailed in Germany or Italy

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and still endures in Russia. Individual and collective freedom exists for all to earn their living and to enjoy the benefits of property rights. Although there is a great deal of state intervention in the exercise of property rights as far as business and industry are concerned, such intervention is probably not too different from the kind that is found, for instance, in Italy or France, which are democratic countries. In other words, state intervention in these fields is not necessarily evidence of totalitarianism, although there are areas in which the influence of Falange philosophy is apparent. Instead what is involved is rather the European approach to what they rate as a mature and poor economy rather than the rich frontier economic structure which, they feel, prevails in America.

On the question of political freedom, it is quite obvious that Franco claims political control as a prerogative unto himself, and the regime controls all forms and methods of political expression. At first these controls were very severe, but as the Government's stability has increased these controls have been materially relaxed, especially in the area of information and communication. In the purely organizational realm of political activity, no change has occurred. Only one party is authorized, the Falange, and that is nothing more than what Franco wants it to be at any given moment.

A definite change has taken place in regard to the communication of ideas. Much more foreign news is published in the press, including a certain amount of critical material. Foreign periodicals enter with relative freedom, and foreign correspondents enjoy a much greater degree of freedom of movement. One of the more recent developments in Spain has been the appearance of a certain amount of criticism of specific governmental activities. It is quite true that this may afford the regime a convenient way to remove certain individuals and eliminate unpopular measures, but even if this cynical interpretation is correct, it nevertheless represents a change in a country where at first the Government was infallible. The atmosphere is undoubtedly very far from what we would be willing to accept as satisfactory. Many writers have found great difficulty in publishing their writings, and censorship is ever present. Nevertheless, every day that elapses and every additional degree of freedom of expression that is permitted makes it that much more difficult for a return to prior conditions.

Private criticism of the Government on general or specific grounds is indulged in freely. Anyone who is familiar with countries where this is not feasible is surprised upon frequenting a restaurant or other public place with Spanish friends to hear them openly criticize the regime and many of its acts. This criticism is not restricted to people outside government service; officials are just as free in stating their views.

It should be noted that this right to express disapproval of the Government, its officials and actions is deeply rooted in the Spanish people. Its exercise at present should not be construed as either evidence of widespread dissatisfaction with the regime or an indication that the regime's position is in any way weak. On the contrary, it is eloquent proof of the regime's confidence in its stability. Neutral observers and diplomats who have intimate knowledge of the social and political conditions in Spain agree that at no time has the regime been stronger than it is today.

If one asks whether the overthrow of the Government is desired, the answer is a definite negative. Apparently, overthrowing the Franco Government is the last thing that most Spaniards want. Despite the shortcomings of the regime, the memory of the Civil War and the distressing days that both preceded and followed it is too vividly in their minds for them to risk losing the stability that now prevails for the sake of a hypothetical improvement that might prove entirely illusory. And in any case, even if there were any popular desire to overthrow the regime, no group or combination of groups is presently visible capable of such a task.

TO sum up, then, a fair analysis of present conditions would seem to suggest that the present Government is here to stay; it has already been in power for fifteen years. Prospects for its overthrow are neither present nor visible in the immediately foreseeable future. The majority of Spaniards do not desire a change. Freedom is not only not entirely absent, but there are encouraging signs of increased personal liberty.

Obviously, judged by constitutional democratic standards, there is much that such an observer would deplore in Spain. This is equally true, however, and even more so, with respect to other countries with whom we enjoy much more cordial relations. Political judgments should be made in reference to prevailing conditions, historical background and relative possibilities.

It is high time we recognize a few of these essential facts. Instead of isolating ourselves from what is going on in Spain, we should endeavor to re-evaluate what our relations with that country and its people should be. Certainly such an objective appraisal could not fail to reveal the desire for contact with our people and our institutions that is most evident in Spain. A tremendously useful service could be rendered by paving the way for an increased exchange of persons and ideas between our countries. Only by such efforts can we help the Spanish people to evolve gradually towards a greater degree of personal and collective freedom and improved social and economic conditions. There is no reason why a thoughtful re-examination of the present Spanish picture should not prove useful; it might well bring about a more cordial relationship between the people of Spain and of the United States.

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FROM FRANCE

Abbé Pierre and The Homeless

Paris

EARLY in January, at a night session of the French Assembly, the Government rejected an amendment that would have set free a billion and a half francs for building emergency dwelling units for the homeless. Two months later the same Government decided to float a loan of five billions for the financing of twelve thousand emergency dwelling units. The radio, posters, a whole apparatus of publicity was set in train to put over this loan.

What had taken place in the meantime? An extraordinary reversal of public opinion touched by the appeals of a simple abbé who yesterday was virtually unknown, has made him today for all France the symbol of charity in action. A letter written to a Minister and an appeal over the radio were enough to make Abbé Pierre a new sort of Vincent de Paul. People crowded to hear him talk, men wept, women gave away their jewels, their furs, checks from one hundred thousand to half a million francs.

For years there had not been in France such a demonstration of popular feeling. And it was all simply because a man stood up and said: "This cannot continue. This is the way young French families are living a few kilometers from the heart of the capital." People listened to this man because he was not satisfied to observe and describe the appalling misery of those who had to sleep in the open or were wretchedly housed but went to live amongst them and share their lot.

This man was formerly a Capuchin, a chaplain in the Resistance forces (he had carried the brother of General de Gaulle on his own back in order to help him to escape to Switzerland during the Occupation). He had been a deputy in the National Assembly and a sponsor of federalist and internationalist movements. It was chance that made him a rag-picker and enabled him to understand that the most urgent social problem in France was the problem of shelter.

"IT all began because my house was too big," he told me one day long before what happened in February. He owned an old middle-class house in the worker district of Paris and he soon made it into an international youth hostel. His little house and its park were full all summer. One day a young boy knocked at the door to say that one of the neighbors had just tried to commit suicide: "Come, Father, he is not dead; it is necessary to do something." The abbé went to see him. He had been freed after twenty years' imprisonment in French Guiana. When he returned his wife was unwilling to receive him and he, in turn, was incapable of readjusting himself.

"I had a choice either to comfort him with exhortations to be brave and to think of the Bon Dieu Who loved him, or to take complete charge of him. He came to live with me." So it all began rather slowly. Little by little all sorts of men who were victims of misfortune came to *Emmaus* (that was the name of the hospice). For Christmas in 1951 there were eighteen—eighteen mouths to feed and not a penny to buy food. The abbé went to beg in the cafes. But when they found this out, some of his guests were angry and said to him: "It isn't right for you to go around begging for us. We're going to make the rounds of the ashcans."

They thus began to ply the ragpicker's trade. Every day with what they found among the refuse, on dump heaps, in cellars or lofts, they got together enough to keep the community going. In 1952 they became builders. A family of six people, three of them children, came to beg for shelter. The family was installed in the little ground floor chapel. Then with the help of young students from fourteen different nations they built, in violation of municipal regulations, a barracks which would house five families. The news of this spread among the homeless like wild fire—the news that there was at Neuilly-Plaisance a priest who built homes for people who were penniless. All the misery of Paris and its working quarter then descended on him.

Here are a few figures: half a million Parisians living in furnished rooms or in lodgings that were indescribable. Of sixty-five thousand young couples married in 1949 in the Department of the Seine, twenty-two thousand lived in hotels and paid in rent from a quarter to a half of their wages. Moreover, there was no hope of their ever obtaining an apartment or a house of their own. Some ten thousand people lived in cellars, hangars, vans, old trucks, caves or wretched hovels. There were ménages of several young couples living together without privacy in a single room nine by twelve. There

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were, as a result of all this, men and women who went mad, committed suicide, killed their children or sank into debauchery and alcoholism.

Within two months Abbé Pierre succeeded in calling these figures to the attention of every Frenchman. It could be said that he had done what Ministers and specialists had never been able to do: to make the entire nation aware of the veritable national disaster constituted by the housing situation in France.

HOW did he manage it? Here again circumstances helped him. Last winter was particularly severe all over France. The temperature fell well below freezing in Paris and throughout Seine et Oise. Knowing that nearly two thousand men and women used to sleep outside in all weather, the abbé and his ragpickers went about distributing warm soup and sandwiches as soon as we had the first cold nights. Early one morning they found an old woman who had died of the cold: she held clutched in her shriveled hand an eviction notice three days old. The abbé, then, with a few newspapermen, set out to arouse public opinion. The *Radio Nationale* allowed him time one afternoon to make a moving appeal: he asked the people of Paris to send warm clothing, stoves and blankets to a hotel which had been put at his disposal. He made this appeal at one o'clock. Forty-five minutes later, when the abbé reached the Hotel Rochester near the Champs Elysées, the street was completely choked with taxis and cars.

At the end of four days one hundred and twenty tons of clothing and bedding and one hundred and fifty million francs had poured into the Rochester. By the first of April there were several million tons of supplies and half a million francs. Probably for the first time in the history of Paris no one had to sleep out in the open. There was a tremendous competition between the ministries, the police and private agencies in giving help. The subway and the railroads opened their stations. Certain churches threw open their crypts or their parish halls, the army its barracks. For a whole week volunteer workers went about the streets gathering up the destitute and the homeless.

Similar things took place in all the large provincial cities. Throughout the month of February France had regained her common soul. In the hall of the Hotel Rochester mink coats could be seen next to students' uniforms and the old clothes of the unemployed or of workingmen. For the first time in a long while the French people were reunited, fighting shoulder to shoulder. Political divisions had disappeared and there was only one objective: to save men, women and children from hunger and cold.

If he had accomplished only that, Abbé Pierre would already deserve the gratitude of all French people. But I had the opportunity before, during and after that February campaign to observe him at work. He is a man who knows where he wants to go. Will he get there? That is another story.

In any case he is bent on obtaining from the authorities guarantees that next winter in all the large cities there will be shelters numerous enough to take care of all the homeless. He requested that during periods of extreme cold the ancient right of sanctuary, which has fallen into disuse since the Middle Ages, would be respected by the police. (This was actually in effect in Paris last February.)

He urged the Government to build emergency dwelling units for all those families who wandered from hotel room to hotel room and then had to sleep outside after the fifteenth of each month. He has already persuaded the Government to finance the construction of twelve thousand of the needed dwelling units. He himself sets the example. With the funds which the generosity of the public brought him, he has begun the building of a thousand dwelling units. His ragpicker-builders furnish the manpower. Last month the first fifty of these units were opened.

Finally, he has appealed to all young people who are free this summer to come and contribute their time to clear the land on which the emergency housing will be built. His aim for the moment, it is clear, is extremely simple: "Homes for the homeless." He has attained such popularity that he is able, according to his own words, successfully to play the part of the flea whose role is to arouse the administration from its sleep. A question is whether he will be able to carry out this work and at the same time keep silent on the political matters that also concern him so deeply.

A former member of the House of Deputies, the abbé knows well the inner workings of the Government. He knows the reasons for the failure of the public authorities in the field of construction and his tongue burns to denounce them publicly. He wants to speak out against the war in Indochina, rearmament, economic Malthusianism, the selfishness of the managerial class. . . .

He has promised his friends to keep silent as long as is necessary to bring to a successful conclusion the national campaign for the homeless and poorly housed. Will he be able to keep his promise? Right now there are many in Paris who are worried about his growing prestige and are watching for his least false step, if they are not actively seeking to make him blunder. They would be happy to be able to say one day: "You see, Abbé Pierre is a fine speaker, a demagogue. He has proved no better than the others. . . ."

In the meantime the heart of the French people is clearly with the man who succeeded magnificently in rousing the well-to-do from their inertia during that tragic month of February.

ROBERT BARRAT.

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Wine and Fig Trees

ROSE GRIECO

WITH the dawning of Columbus Day, in the time of my childhood, there was always an air of excitement about; for this was the day on which my father and uncles dedicated their labors to the fine art of wine-making. Accompanied by the first sounds of morning, the trucks would arrive, heavily laden with innumerable boxes, the sides of which were bursting with rich, ripe grapes. The sharp October air became flooded with their heady aroma, and suddenly, a strange Mediterranean atmosphere enveloped our immediate neighborhood.

A wine-press was as necessary to an Italian in America as the clothes on his back. Since no one in our family was abounding in wealth, my father and his two brothers-in-law had a friendly little conference one day over a gallon of wine and a few pounds of prosciutto. At this conference, it was decided that the three of them would invest equally in a wine-press, make their wine together, and share the precious results. If anyone imagines there was ever a conference in the history of the world in which the main topic of discussion was treated with more seriousness or respect, then he is sadly ignorant of the part that home-made wine plays in the life of an Italian.

As soon as any of us could walk, we managed to find our way down the cellar stairs that led into the area of wonder and excitement where the wine was made. Our mothers' remonstrations were in vain, for the sounds of our fathers' voices, re-telling the stories of their youth, or bursting unexpectedly into song, and the intriguing aroma that floated out of the open windows, lured us as magically as any witches' brew. During the days when the wine was quietly fermenting, the fumes in the cellar were enough to have blown us out into the park, if we hadn't been so well-conditioned to meet them.

The sampling of the wine truly meant a time of beauty. On this important day, my father and uncles, like generals before a conquering army, would lead the parade into the cellar. Their wives followed, with children of various ages filling in the ranks. My Uncle Angelo, the oldest of the family, flanked by my father and Uncle Joe, solemnly put a pitcher under the spigot, as we all gazed in silence at the pure red liquid that flowed into it. Uncle Angelo was never one to hurry an event in which he was playing a leading role. After ceremoniously filling his glass, he lifted it high into the air, as he and the other two judges looked at it critically. It was crystal-clear; the wine had passed the first test. Now for the crucial part, the taste. Uncle Angelo looked at his audience with the unashamed satisfaction of an actor playing to a full house; then, slowly lifting the glass to his mouth, took a few swallows, licked his lips thoughtfully, as he gazed off into space, to about the count of ten, nodded silently, and passed the pitcher to my father, who was next in line. He went through the same motions, only there was no nonsense about slowing up the process, for my father knew after the first few swallows that all was right with the world. He didn't come up for air until the glass was empty.

Uncle Joe realized that if my father and Uncle Angelo had given A-ratings to their product, his vote amounted to an abstention. Brushing aside formalities, he put the pitcher to his lips, and swallowed contentedly, while gentle smiles began to appear on the faces of the spectators. Our mothers knew that during the coming year, tired bodies would relax and worried minds would be soothed, with the arrival of a bottle of good wine on the table. Songs of ages past were joyfully revived for the occasion, and we were privileged to enter for a few hours the world of our ancestors.

AS we grew up, our fathers decided it was time to begin passing on the technique of wine-making to their tall, sturdy sons. No doubt they felt that in transmitting the knowledge, they would be endowing their sons with a yearly experience which would enrich their living and maintain a warm relationship among them. They had visions of their sons and their sons' sons enjoying the period of wine-making as they and their fathers had enjoyed it, both in Italy and America. They would never have believed it was possible to go through the entire period of making wine without occasional music and laughter.

In each family, the first-born of our Italian parents was called upon to participate in our annual October event. When I first learned that my brother and cousins were going to take an active part in the wine-making, I was thrilled to think that although they would be playing football on Saturday surrounded by resplendent American oaks and wild American cheers, they were

Miss Grieco during the past two years has contributed several articles on Italian-American life to The Commonweal.

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still keeping alive the precious thread that connected them with their ancestors, by learning an art which had been developed long ages ago.

However, from the moment the trucks arrived on that revealing day, it became tragically clear to everyone present that a change was taking place. My cousins Ugo and John and my brother Jim carried the boxes from the truck into the cellar with the briskness and precision of an ant army. If one of them paused for a moment to tie his shoelace, Ugo advised him to hurry along. Instead of the customary sounds of laughter and music in the background, I could almost hear the rat-a-tat-tat of drums. For cousin Ugo, who was now in college and constantly preoccupied with progressive approaches to all aspects of living, had made the unhappy mistake of clocking the beautiful adventure of wine-making. He had calculated how many boxes could be carried by three young men per hour, how long it would take to empty the grapes into the press, and approximately when they would be finished with the first phase of the project.

When the young bloods, seriously engrossed in the heavy work of carrying the boxes, observed their fathers, leisurely descending the back stairs, with a gallon of old wine to keep them company, they sighed patiently and quietly accepted the futility of trying to separate the wine from its proud owners. Without quite knowing how it happened, the fathers found themselves advanced to the role of supervisors. The sad truth behind this promotion is simply that the boys felt their elders were too old to do the actual work and would only slow up the pace they had set for themselves.

At noon, everyone gathered upstairs to partake of the sumptuous meal our mothers had prepared. Once seated around the tables which had been joined together to accommodate everyone, our fathers held the stage once more. They started reminiscing about the many years they had spent making wine together, and in Uncle Angelo's super-charged imagination, incidents which had been rather ordinary at the time, sparked by a good amount of wine and glorified by his fanciful memory, took on the melodramatic proportions we all loved. Everyone relaxed and settled back comfortably. Then my father broke into one of his favorite Italian folk-melodies, which Uncle Angelo joined by giving the necessary responses. By this time, we all knew the choruses well enough to lend our doubtful talents to the music. Just as things were getting merry, Ugo wiped his mouth, got up brusquely, and announced, "Well, fellas, how about it? We can't sing and get the wine made, too."

JOHN and Jim arose dutifully, as their fathers stared at Ugo, completely baffled by his last statement. Then slowly, reluctantly, they too followed downstairs, only they remembered to take the rest of the wine with them. The look Ugo threw in their direction when they re-entered the cellar, well supplied with wine and glasses, was enough to silence any music they might have brought with them. The work progressed at a swift and steady pace, for Ugo had set aside three hours that evening for homework.

Everything went according to schedule; but as the night wore on, and the fathers observed the new quality that their favorite chore had taken on, a sadness began to come over them, for they realized that what had once been a labor of love had somehow developed into just another day's work.

Uncle Joe regarded his student son with a mixture of admiration for his ability to get things done, plus a perplexed disturbance at his inability to get any joy out of it. Perhaps it was only because they'd had less to do this year that our fathers drank more than usual. In any case they were much relieved to have the strong arms of their sons help them upstairs, when it came time to leave the cellar. There had been no singing this evening and very little laughter; and everyone realized that all had not gone well with the wine-making.

When we bade each other good night, I lingered for a moment with Uncle Joe. There was a sadness about him. It encompassed more than this one day and this particular project. I reached for his hand in silence, not knowing which question would bring the answer to his sorrow. His eyes slowly filled.

"The fig-tree," he murmured. "When I'm gone, what will become of the fig-tree? They don't teach you in college how to wrap it in the autumn, so it will stay warm and alive under the winter skies of America."

"Your sons will remember," I assured him.

He shook his head. "Even if they remember, who will tell my sons' sons? It is a thing of the heart."

I knew only too well what Uncle Joe meant, and when I went to bed that night, the warmth had gone from the usual feeling I had on the day of the wine-making in October.

THEN the war came, and much more than frontiers were changed. For cousin Ugo was sent to Europe and faced death in many battles in the land of his ancestors, fighting those who spoke the language of his people. And when the tides of war made friends of former foes, and he could see his father's people, whom he had never known, he began to feel a strengthening of the tie which had been loosened in America. He heard again the songs out of his own childhood, and he

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grew to love a people who sometimes let too much heart destroy their balance. He gradually re-discovered values which had been forgotten in the speed of American living; and he returned to us a wiser, richer human being.

Now, when the leaves begin to turn, and October floods the land, and in many homes in America thoughts turn to the making of the wine, a call goes out from a father to his sons, who now have sons of their own. All things are forgotten on this day as each of our fathers gathers his sons about him, to share in a family rite that will outlive them all. Our family has expanded greatly but has not scattered very far. The wine-presses have multiplied, so that fathers now share them with their sons. When the call goes out to the various homes for this autumnal gathering, I can almost hear the sound of the ancient horn that gathered communities together in times of crises and decision.

It is a lovely thing to see the sons arrive with their own little boys, who observe their grandfathers and fathers making wine out of grapes with the same wonder and excitement we knew as children. Ugo brings his young son with him, and the joyous warmth that was distracted for a while has come back; for Ugo's Latin spirit has found itself. As Uncle Joe puffs contentedly on his pipe, a gentle peace comes over him as he observes the rapt attention of his grandson watching Ugo enacting a role he will one day inherit. Ugo joins his father in a glass of wine, and even gives young Joe a sip, as sounds of laughter and old music mingle with the grape-scented air.

Uncle Joe sleeps soundly and serenely as the years grow upon him. The fears he knew in other years have long since disappeared. The future of his fig-tree disturbs him no more. He knows now it will thrive in the climate of America, and all will be well with the land.

THE SCREEN

TWO COINS DOWN THE DRAIN

THE new "Three Coins in the Fountain," most of which was photographed in Rome, has some of the most beautiful shots of that city ever to appear in a movie—and I'm not forgetting last year's fine "Roman Holiday." But unfortunately "Three Coins" is based on the slick premise that every woman considers every man she meets as a prospective husband. The central figures of the film are three dizzy dames who see the grandeurs of Rome, including some magnificent architecture, parks and vistas, mainly as background for their pursuit of happiness and husband.

The youngest, played by Maggie McNamara, sets her cap for a prince—no less. Known around town as the "predatory prince," this wealthy man is given little more than a surface charm by Louis Jourdan; one wonders why Maggie works so hard to land him and how such a sophisticated man can fall for her obvious plan of attack.

The second girl (Jean Peters) is in love with a young Italian law student (Rossano Brazzi) from her office, but since her hands are tied by her boss who insists on no office dates, she walks out on her job and moves in with her impecunious young man for a few days. (At this point of the picture the administrators of the Production Code must have been asleep; no one except Jean's boss seems particularly disturbed at the moral problems involved in this situation.) And the third woman (Dorothy McGuire) is a not-so-young secretary who has been in love with her boss (Clifton Webb), an expatriate American author, for fifteen years. Just why she is in love with this man, a sort of prissy Somerset Maugham character, is not made too clear; but her story is the most interesting of the three and is made the most convincing thanks to the good performances of McGuire and Webb.

The solutions to the various plots are strictly women's-magazine stuff; and it's hard to believe that the shallow script (based on a novel by John H. Secondari) could have been written by John Patrick, who wrote such good plays as "The Hasty Heart" and "The Teahouse of the August Moon." Perhaps if you can disregard the story you'll enjoy this travelogue which shows off Rome so handsomely in CinemaScope and color and offers a side excursion to Venice.

WHILE the recent French import "Le Plaisir" also tries to catch the spirit of place and a bygone day, the film is so artificial and pointless that it seldom comes to life either as lively comedy or vital commentary. Three unrelated short stories by Guy de Maupassant are held together by the narration in English of Peter Ustinov, whose voice we hear as the author, but whom we do not see. "The Mask" tells the story of an old man who refuses to grow old and give up the pleasures of the world. "The Model" tells about a painter (Daniel Gelin) and his model (Simone Simon) whose love affair ends in their being tied together through life after attempted suicide. And "The House of Madame Tellier" tells about a group of prostitutes who go to the First Communion of the niece of their madame.

Producer-director Max Ophuls, who likes to decorate his films with frills and frou-frou, has practically smothered this three-part venture. If the tales are meant to be shocking, they don't even succeed on that score. No doubt Ophuls hoped to give us a French smattering of de Maupassant and his times, but "Le Plaisir" adds up to little more than a series of overly

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elaborate and pompously drawn-out smoking-room jokes.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dubuque, Iowa

TO the Editors: In your Communications department of May 14, Ed Marciniak of Chicago has a roundup of how U.S. Catholic papers covered Bishop Sheil's speech on Senator McCarthy. Mr. Marciniak writes: "*The Witness* (Dubuque, Iowa) mentioned the Bishop's talk in a story that also quoted favorable comments about the Senator at the N.Y. communion breakfast."

Just to keep the record straight, may we correct Mr. Marciniak's letter.

In the first place *The Witness* did not quote "favorable comments about the Senator at the N.Y. communion breakfast." We said that there were a lot of cops there (it being a police department Holy Name breakfast) and that they did a lot of applauding.

What Mr. Marciniak called "a story" was really two stories neatly separated by a 3-em dash. They were run in the same column because both came into our office the same week.

It is misleading to say that *The Witness* "mentioned the Bishop's talk." Many readers, I believe, will infer from Mr. Marciniak's language that The Witness *merely* mentioned Bishop Sheil's speech in a story dealing primarily with something else. As mentioned above, *The Witness* had a separate and independent report of what the Bishop had to say. That item was slightly longer than the item dealing with the communion breakfast. Dealing as it did with a later and more important event, it was placed ahead of the communion breakfast report.

Mr. Marciniak presumably wished to stimulate discussion about how Catholic papers should deal with such subjects as Bishop Sheil's address. A good idea. It is a much better idea correctly to report the facts that should serve as a basis for such discussion.

(*Rt. Rev. Msgr.*) WILLIAM D. GREEN,
Editor, The Witness.

Louisville, Ky.

TO the Editors: I have no wish to be petulant, but I believe Mr. Ed Marciniak did *The Record* a slight injustice. . . . The letter dealt with the manner in which the Catholic press carried the remarks of Bishop Sheil on McCarthyism. Mr. Marciniak said *The Record* "in its 'Opinion' section ran a few sentences from the Bishop's talk alongside some laudatory remarks made by Monsignor McCaffrey about the Senator at the New York communion breakfast."

Actually *The Record* carried nine full paragraphs from the speech of Bishop Sheil, one incomplete paragraph from Monsignor McCaffrey. The word "Opinion" was a headline on the story. *The Record* has no "Opinion" section, as the entire paper is devoted to the expression of opinion.

(*Rev.*) J. WILLIAM MCKUNE,
Managing Editor, The Record.

REPLY

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: Upon re-reading *The Record,* I find that I am in agreement with Father McKune and am glad to have him set the record straight.

But my comment on *The Witness* articles stands as strictly factual. *The Witness* ran a two-line, two column head which read:

"Catholic Opinions Differ on Senator Joe McCarthy."

If Monsignor Green insists that what followed this headline was not "a story," he is splitting 3-em dashes. The first three paragraphs read:

"Senator Joseph R. McCarthy (Rep.), investigator of Communism and other evils in the federal government continues to make news even in the field of religious journalism.

"The Senator has been frequently attacked by non-Catholic clergymen, some of whom see an essential connection between what they consider the 'evils' of Catholicism and so-called McCarthyism. Last week for the first time the Senator was assailed by a Catholic Bishop.

"Shortly before this, the Senator was warmly applauded at a Holy Name Society breakfast in N.Y. by 6,000 rank and file N.Y. Catholic policemen. The anti-McCarthy newspaper, the N.Y. *Times,* called the policemen's ovation 'overwhelming.' "

Then comes a "3-em dash" with seven sentences on the Bishop's talk, three of which explain that the Bishop was "speaking in the realm of politics rather than religion." After this, there is another "3-em dash" followed by six sentences on the N.Y. communion breakfast from which I quote two sentences:

"Mr. McCarthy said later that it was certainly one of the greatest receptions he had received, if not the greatest.

"Cardinal Spellman shook hands with Senator McCarthy to the applause of the crowd said to be the largest that ever attended a meeting of the police Holy Name Society."

I can't be held responsible for the fact that the pro-McCarthy "Catholic opinions" referred to in *The Witness* headline were registered by the applause of N.Y. policemen or came from the Wisconsin Senator's own mouth.

ED MARCINIAK.

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The Essential Teddy Roosevelt

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

THE career of Theodore Roosevelt is of continuing interest, for he was the first modern president. Lincoln has the contemporaneity of greatness but between him and the first Roosevelt stretches a shadowy procession of dim figures who seem almost as remote to us in our present concerns as the lesser Caesars of dying Rome.

Roosevelt is central to our understanding of many persistent problems: the scope of the federal government and the origins of the protective state, American engagement in world affairs, the shape of the Republican Party and the meaning of the conservative tradition in this country, the impact of personality on history, and the complex interplay of morals and politics and of ideas and politics.

Not so strangely perhaps, systematic consideration of Roosevelt in these larger contexts has been neglected by historians. His significance has been blurred, if not lost sight of entirely, by the bewildering and diverting impact of his striking personality. The more-than-life-size dimensions of this fabulous man with his grin full of teeth; clenched fist; rasping rhetoric; Rough Riders' campaign hat; his instinct for the memorable phrase; his interest in poetry, history, wild life, simplified spelling, and scores of other topics, and his indestructible *élan* which carried him from a cattle ranch in the Dakotas to San Juan hill, and from the White House to the green hills of Africa, has dominated all the books and memoirs about him. Harold Ickes once said, "TR bit me and I never recovered," and analysis of Roosevelt has remained about on this level for too long.

This overemphasis of personality to the expense of measured understanding has occurred with other picturesque figures in our history, notably Andrew Jackson. It was not until 1945 in Arthur Schlesinger's *The Age of Jackson* that a synthesis and a really searching interpretation of Jackson and his period were achieved. Roosevelt, fortunately, has not had to wait so long. Henry Pringle began to clear away the necessary ground in 1931 with his brilliant and definitive biography of Roosevelt the man. Now Elting Morison and John Blum have carried the reexamination an important step forward by editing and publishing the concluding two of these eight volumes of Roosevelt's correspondence [*The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*. Volumes VII & VIII. Harvard. $20. for the set of these two volumes].

A word must be added at the outset as to the quality and character of this edition of Roosevelt's correspondence. Research foundations and universities have made it possible to undertake huge, co-operative enterprises in scholarship such as the more than one hundred volumes of Jefferson's correspondence now being edited at Princeton.

The waters between exhaustive compilations of this kind on the one side and the popular one-volume of biography or selected letters on the other is treacherous.

The objective of the editors has been to present Roosevelt's letters in some manageable form that includes everything a scholar would consider important and yet not encompass so much that the layman gets bogged down in repetitious and trivial material. A task of this kind requires the most discriminating sense of what is relevant and a keen feeling for the central controversies of Roosevelt and his period. The editors have carried it off. The eight volumes contain some ten thousand letters out of the more than one hundred thousand Roosevelt wrote, the notes are discreet, informative, and highly readable, and the essays and appendices probing and imaginative. One has here the essential Roosevelt material set in meaningful context.

IT is commonly thought that prosperity breeds conservatism and that only depressions provoke waves of social reform. Certainly this has been true in the last thirty years as it was in the age of Jackson. Yet paradoxically the Progressive and New Freedom movements flourished during the golden decade of prosperity and economic expansion prior to 1914. They followed the farm agitation of the '70's and the industrial depression of the mid-'90's, yet of themselves those periods of economic *malaise* produced nothing. The later progressivism was generated in large part by middle-income people who felt no economic pinch. (A most interesting analysis of the social backgrounds of the leaders of the Progressive Party of 1912 in volume eight makes this abundantly clear.) As far as these people were concerned, the evils they sought to reform were at second or third remove from themselves.

These then are the circumstances which give the Progressive reform movement its special interest: it was a considered moral response and not an economic re-

Mr. Shannon is Washington correspondent for the New York Post and co-author of "The Truman Merry-Go-Round."

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flex. In taking the leadership of this inchoate movement, Roosevelt exemplified conservatism in its creative and, unfortunately, uncommon form. Only Willkie's effort to reshape Republican thinking on foreign policy has equalled it in scope and daring.

Since Progressivism was at bottom a morally-inspired movement, it was natural that indignation was its characteristic emotion and exhortation its prevailing rhetoric. It was no accident that Roosevelt's sentence "We stand at Armageddon and we battle for the Lord" became the climactic slogan of 1912.

To some, it may seem to be begging the question to say that Progressivism was the flowering of conservatism since many liberals claim Roosevelt as one of their own. Roosevelt, however, was indisputably a conservative. He always stood decidedly to the right of Altgeld, Bryan, the Populists, and the other liberals of his time. In any social showdown, he championed the side of property and the established social order. He favored the hanging of the Haymarket rioters (unlike Altgeld), he supported Cleveland in the crushing of Debs and the railroad strikers by force in 1893, and he idly talked of resorting to violence if Bryan triumphed in 1896. At the same time as one must insist on Roosevelt's conservatism, one must also reject the picture of him as a showy, opportunistic trimmer so glumly advanced by such contemporaries as the elder LaFollette. This second distortion, like the first, has colored many subsequent books on Roosevelt.

THE confusion about Roosevelt's role arises from something fundamental in the nature of class conflict in this country. It is a false cliché that we have no classes in America. The fact is rather that class lines are not so rigid and class conflict has not been, and need not be, so naked and savage as it is in Europe. Our large and diverse middle classes mediate between the rich and the poor. Politicians anchor their position on one base or the other and then appeal to those in between to decide the issue.

Roosevelt was a superb politician because though from the upper class himself, he shared the ethical outlook, the fears, and the instinct for moderation of the middle classes. Speaking always in terms of the interests of the nation, he appealed in behalf of the owners of industry and wealth whom he would infuse with responsibility and restrain with regulation. His twin bogeys were the robber baron and the socialist. A liberal leader like Franklin Roosevelt, on the other hand, argued for a fairly drastic reordering of society in behalf of the embattled masses, and appealed to the middle class to cooperate on grounds of the reasonableness and gradualness of the change as well as its inherent desirability. It might be said that Theodore Roosevelt, the conservative, spiked his caution with calls to militancy while Franklin Roosevelt, the liberal, moderated his militancy with pleas for caution.

To achieve his moderate goals Theodore Roosevelt had to transform conceptions of government that had long transfixed both the right and the left. When he entered public life in the early 1880's, the genteel vision of politics was in the ascendancy. E. L. Godkin had popularized the notion that since both parties were essentially corrupt, the only ethical role for a good man was to be a Mugwump, vacillating from one party to the other, depending on the candidate and the issue of the moment. Roosevelt with instinctive common sense saw that this kind of "independence" was most often an adventure in futility. Party loyalty was the indispensable first step to party responsibility and only responsible parties could give responsible government. His support for Blaine in 1884 was dictated by intellectual considerations more fundamental than mere personal expediency.

The Mugwump conception of politics, moreover, was valid only if one assumed that government was not a matter of vital importance. Big business was surely content with little government. Ironically enough, the liberals, bemused by a strict devotion to Jeffersonian doctrine, agreed. To them government was just another engine of monopoly oppression bestowing tariff protection, land grants, and other favors on their enemies. Roosevelt, having gained the leadership of the conservatives by the accident of McKinley's death, seized his opportunity to protect conservative interests intelligently by accomplishing many of the specific objectives of the liberals, and he did so by using the instrument both had scorned—the federal government. "That government governs best which governs least" died with his accession to the White House.

ROOSEVELT used the powers of the national government in a similar mediating role in foreign affairs. He was aware of the emergence of new nations like Germany and Japan that were uneasily moving the old balance of power. It was his personal decision in 1898 that sent Dewey's fleet to capture the Philippines and injected America into the Far Eastern power scene. In 1905, he personally mediated the Russo-Japanese War. These were fateful moves, for the step is short from mediation to intervention.

Many-sided and complex, Roosevelt exemplifies the impact one great man can have on history. If he and his followers lost control of the Republican party to their standpatter enemies, those enemies and their successors have nonetheless never been quite able to exercise his ghost. It is impossible for them to do so for Roosevelt helped decisively to put America on paths from which, once entered upon, there is no turning back.

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Dr. Andrew Carew's Jealous God

A SEED UPON THE WIND. By William Michelfelder. Bobbs-Merrill. $3.50.

By ANNE FREMANTLE

THE first time Dr. Carew ever saw a dying patient as a dying human being was when Mr. Deravel struck him in the face with his rosary beads. The next time was when Mrs. Wilfret, whom he had coaxed back from one attack (she had coronary thrombosis) died on him because she could not face her daughter who hated her. She had told Andy Carew before dying: "You are within God. Look around you and discover Him in the sorrow, in love, in the sunrise of all your days to come." This takes place in a Catholic hospital in Florida. Dr. Carew's troubled conscience drives him to whisky: he tortures himself by asking, had he killed Mrs. Wilfret, by "negligence" in the language of science? And, in the language of religion, had he sent her to hell, flung her into eternity damning her own daughter?

Of course the reader knows Andy Carew did neither. The coronary, as the saintly Dr. Snavely, the hospital's senior physician, explains when Carew's enemies gather to gloat over his fall, would have carried Mrs. Wilfret off anyhow, and her last words were of fear, not hate. But the doctor is trapped in his own fears, and at the mercy of his detractors. Nor is he helped by his friends, of whom the chief is Margie Butler, a nurse "appetizing to the eye, with a cone of blond hair whirling up into the air," and "nicely painted mouth whose petulant restlessness said she had grown up quickly and not with pleasure." Like the doctor, she had been "shortchanged right at the moment she put up funds for a Catholic bill of goods." Margie Butler likes admiring herself in the nude. Unfortunately, on one occasion she neglects to lock her door, and Sister Agnes, seeking Mrs. Wilfret's onyx ring, comes in. Miss Butler knocks her out with a well-aimed hand-mirror.

Next morning, at six a.m. Mass, Dr. Carew walks out on his job right after the Consecration, followed by Miss Butler, who proposes that wherever he goes, she should go too. They go to a hotel nearby, and indulge in some sozzled sex, recorded in far too explicit terms, and then entrain for New York. On the train, Margie assists an asthmatic. The asthmatic and her husband are rich Methodists, who give Dr. Carew a job in their hospital, asking no questions. But although Andy Carew has cut the lifeline of grace, he cannot cut the umbilical cord which binds him to the Church. He will not marry Margie, and instead, from anguish aggravated by whisky, gets ulcers and dies, unshriven, from a violent hemorrhage, crying, "God is love."

Mr. Michelfelder has taken Titian's two ladies, Sacred and Profane Love (equally beautiful) and has turned them into two vultures. Poor Dr. Carew's God is a mixture of Jehovah and a Jansenist, a jealous God Who gives only what He gets, measuring back to His creatures the coffeespoonfuls of love they give Him. Sisters Agnes, Margaret and Rose, and Margie Butler, gave Him a petulant purity, and got unsatisfied passions in return. He is somewhat kinder to the men: at least to Drs. Carew and Emerson and to Father Keslar and the Rev. Mr. Ordway He gives hearts to know and love Him. Yet, though Mr. Michelfelder makes God his central character, he makes Him sadly contradictory. For He must be Truth first, or it would not be true that He is Love, and we would not believe it. Also His justice is a function of His mercy—not vice-versa. The novel is admirably anti-clerical, making sanely and savagely clear the difference between certain ministers and the Faith and sacraments they serve. It distinguishes sharply, and often with a

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grim humor, between the human instruments of Grace, and the spiritual and supernatural realities.

Dr. Ordway, the Protestant chaplain, dreams of a "union of fire flowing from his tongue to a meeting place of love" where there shall be no distinction of Jew or Gentile, Catholic nor heretic. But he does not realize that, as he put it himself, "love is recognition," and that here people must be recognized as they are, not as they will be in heaven. Here and now, smelly and stupid, sinful and sick, severed from each other by history, ideology, diet, politics and religion, they must be recognized and loved.

Yet it is a novel about so much that it fails by its very quality of sincere spiritual ambition. It provides a lively picture of one segment of society, and creates a truly magic mood, and is, right through, well written.

Perhaps neither Dr. Carew, the Catholic, nor Dr. Ordway, the Protestant, wholly realize that there are two great commandments, and that Jesus Christ emphatically called one the first and the other the second, setting them in order. Love thy God with thy whole heart, and *then* thy neighbor as thyself. If they are juxtaposed, the world is turned upside-down, as it was for poor Andy Carew and Margie Butler, loving themselves, their souls and bodies, and each other as themselves, instead of loving God in the bodies and souls of all the sick committed to their care. And they found, poor not-so-young people, the one drunkenness and death, the other lust and loss.

The March Hare believed in butter for the works of his watch, and Mr. Michelfelder believes in love, smeared wholesale in his novel, doubtless the best love, as the March Hare's was the best butter. Yet both seem surprised when the characters, like the watch, will not work.

A Palpable Romantic

UNDER THE NET. By Iris Murdoch. Viking. $3.50.

By JEAN HOLZHAUER

JAKE Donaghue, the hero and teller of this tale, is the man that everybody knows. A writer, he is sometimes brilliant on paper, never in living. He strives to possess truth, acts on impulse, reaches for order and picks up chaos. His apprehension of people and circumstances is often fantastically wrong; he falls in love with the wrong women, rejects the wrong friends, finds himself weakly liking the wrong enemies, is sidetracked in his enterprises by trivialities, and all for the wrong reasons. As he describes himself in this novel, he is a palpable romantic and not much good for anything. In that respect, he is uncomfortably real.

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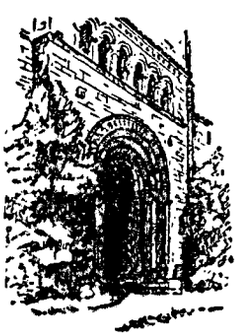

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Iris Murdoch, who sounds more competent than her protagonist (at thirty-five, she is a lecturer in philosophy at Oxford University and has previously published *Sartre, Romantic Rationalist*), has given us an odd first novel, strongly flavored with her research in existentialism. It is not clear whether Miss Murdoch endorses such an explanation of life, but her characters find their particular meanings through their own actions, in themselves haphazard and meaningless. Their thoughts, recorded at length by both the author and themselves, are usually disconnected from their acts and often in opposition to them.

Hugo Belfounder, a manufacturer of munitions and fireworks and Donaghue's friend, sets this prevailing theme in a conversation with Donaghue when he says that verbal expression is incapable of truthfully conveying experience. "Then there is no truth?" Donaghue suggests. "Well," says Belfounder cautiously, "I suppose actions don't lie."

Seen through this lens, the actions of all the characters are bizarre and combustible. The two men are constantly aware of not understanding anything, but this does not prevent them from embarking on endless exploits to further confuse themselves. Donaghue's deeds include a wrongheaded estrangement from Belfounder, the theft of a dog movie star, and a swim in the Thames, to mention a few.

What is interesting about all this is not so much the sudden turns of plot as the vividness of its misunderstandings and misconceptions. When Donaghue emerges, in the final chapter, with a clear sense of order at last, a feeling that this time he has himself and his purpose in hand, and then hears one of his amours singing in a radio broadcast, we can be sure that this siren call will lead him astray again. In the restricted, individualistic sense that was Belfounder's, actions may not lie, but Jake Donaghue makes it abundantly clear that they do not contain any large proportion of truth, either.

The tangle of intention and effect is the net we are all under.

New World?

PAST AND FUTURE. By William H. McNeill. University of Chicago. $3.75.

By THOMAS E. KENNELLY

DURING the 1930's it was possible to read Aldous Huxley's, *Brave New World* as a relaxing bit of nonsense. But by the time that the 1950's rolled around another book in the same genre had appeared, George Orwell's, *1984*. I doubt that any sensible person could have read it without a feeling of horror. Horror aroused by the knowledge that in the twenty-year interval technological invention had supplied man with the means to transform his most perverted fantasies into frightful reality. Nor is the anxiety any less when the blueprint of the future is projected in an impersonal scholarly fashion as William H. McNeill does in this book. *Past and Future* is not a work of fiction. It might be less disturbing if

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it were. The book is a prediction of the future based on an analysis of the past. The author is Assistant Professor of History in the College of the University of Chicago and judging from his personal preferences he is a humane and kindly man. But his view of the world to come is not a pleasant one to think about.

The world as it may develop within the next two-hundred years is projected against a schematic view of the past history of mankind and present world tensions. This is the long view of history and the author is aware of the possibility of error in making generalizations of this kind. Nevertheless, he believes it important that some such analysis be made if men are to exert any influence upon the shape of things to come.

It is Mr. McNeill's thesis that the two most urgent problems we face are the problems of war and economic sufficiency. With the establishment of perpetual peace and plenty men can then direct their energies to higher, and perhaps more important ends.

The first step would be the elimination of international war for ever. But before this can be done one dominant nation must arise holding a preponderance of military power so great that it would be impossible to challenge it. Mr. McNeill envisions world war, or a series of world wars occuring leaving in their wake a world in which national and social boundaries will still be visible and with one nation emerging holding sufficient power to keep every other nation in check. It will be the duty of the victorious nation to eliminate the danger of future international warfare by so organizing the rest of mankind that it will be impossible to challenge the dominant power. With control successfully exerted, then it will become possible to mitigate the economic, racial, and moral problems of the world.

What kind of a world would this be? Would it be a world that a civilized man might care to live in? In general outline it would be a world governed by experts responsible to the will of the dominant nation. It would be a world in which nationalism would be eliminated, by persuasion if possible, by violence if necessary. Danger from total war would vanish, but violence on a limited scale would be intensified. Since nations would no longer prepare for war, world resources would be exploited rationally to solve the problem of economic sufficiency. Initially this might involve forced labor, mass migrations and forced removal of populations.

The human beings existing in this world would be men with blunted feelings, psychologically rudderless from the wrench involved in transferring loyalty from the national group to the international government or dominant power. Cultural and racial antagonisms will remain and might even become intensified as the need for a scapegoat increases. Ancestral ways might become so disordered that entire groups would assume a "supine fatalism" and cease to propagate themselves.

Would you like to live in such a world? Mr. McNeill argues that bad as it is it would be preferable to the disorders possible if total war is not eliminated. He implies that the conservatism inherent in government by bureaucracy will eventually slow down the rate of social change and the resulting stability might permit justice and some of the other virtues to enter by the backdoor.

At the best we can expect a government of tolerant officials (best by reason of excellence in social engineering, not by virtue), and at worst government by ruthless dictatorship. I would suggest that considering the extent of military-political, economic, and social control necessary to produce perpetual peace and prosperity our future world will be controlled by a dictator who resembles Big Brother more than he resembles Caesar. And this despite the supreme efforts of any "reformers and visionaries" who respond to Mr. McNeill's call to arms.

REVIEWERS

Jean Holzhauer contributes to several Catholic periodicals.

Thomas E. Kennelly is a critic whose home is in Chicago.

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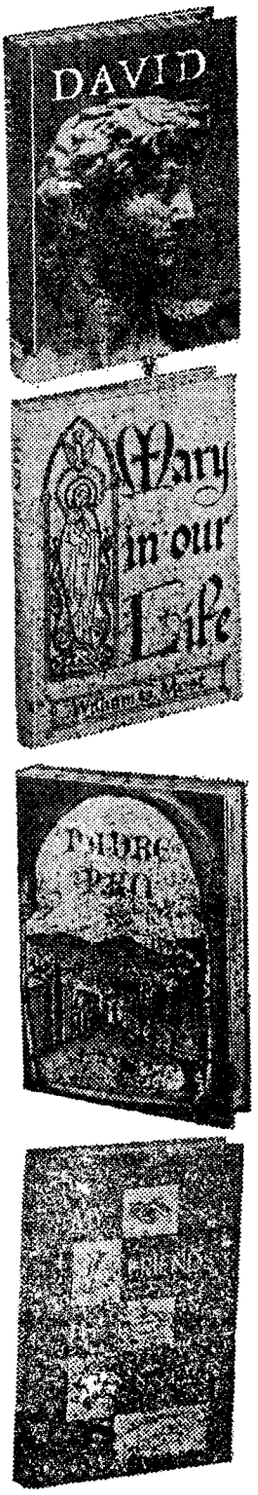

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